

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 13, 2019

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DC Fashion Week Set to Feature Master Milliner Eileen L. Bleyer

78-Year Old Marylander Reconnects with Her Fashion Roots to Create One-Of-a-Kind Pieces

“All women look beautiful in a hat. They just have to find the right one. If you get the perfect hat, your whole outfit is elevated to another level.”

(Washington, D.C.) September 13, 2019 - She is passionate about hat making and this month the world is getting the chance to experience her work. Emerging designer [Eileen L. Bleyer](#) recently showcased her wears at the [Designer Debut](#) at New York Fashion Week and she is gearing up for the 31st International [Couture Collections Show](#) at DC Fashion Week being held at the Embassy of France.

“All women look beautiful in a hat. They just have to find the right one,” Ms. Bleyer [recently told FOX 45 Morning News](#) in Maryland prior to the First Annual Spring Couture Hat Show & Sale and The Lord Baltimore Hotel. “If you get the perfect hat your whole outfit is elevated to another level. You can have a plain dress and a gorgeous hat and it changes your whole persona. And the truth of it is, if you go back over history, the most famous women in the world always wore gorgeous hats. If a woman walks in the room with an outfit with a gorgeous hat, I’ll tell ya, people are going to notice.”

When Eileen Bleyer was a young girl, she would sit outside her Montebello Terrace home and wait for her next door neighbor to bring home scraps of material from a custom fashion shop on Charles Street in Baltimore so she could create elegant clothes for her dolls. She always had an eye for fashion. Earlier this year one of the masterpieces Ms. Bleyer created was

chosen for the 2019 Spring Cover of Ivan Bitton Style House Magazine, Marie Westwood LA. The Ivan Bitton Style House is noted for identifying talented up and coming designers. The spotlight continued to build on her designs when her Preakness inspired hat won the Most Meaningful Hat contest at the annual Hats Off to Hampden Gala on March 30th.

Today, Ms. Bleyer, a 78-year old Harford County resident, owns and operates [Eileen L. Bleyer Millinery](#) out of her Bel Air, Maryland home where she sells upscale handmade fashionable hats and fascinators as well as vintage clothing. Her hats and fascinators are one-of-a-kind pieces that incorporate a variety of elements including silk flowers, feathers, ribbons, fur, and vintage fabric, among other things. Her creations range in price from \$250-1500 for fascinators and couture headpieces.

“I always loved the world of fashion and was inspired by my grandmother and aunts who were entrepreneurial Irish women, always dressed in gorgeous gloves and hats. I used to try them on when visiting. When I was younger, I also excelled in art, particularly oil painting and drawing, so being able to combine the two has been amazing,” said Ms. Bleyer.

At the age of fifteen, Ms. Bleyer bought her own Singer sewing machine and began making her own clothes and at the age of seventeen, she entered an evening gown competition for the State of Maryland and won first prize. (It was pink satin with white lace overlay!) Simultaneously, she continued her formal art training at The Catholic High School where she was enrolled in the Latin Science college prep program and in her senior year, was awarded a one woman show for her oil paintings. Her award winning gown combined with her art show demonstrated her talents and she was awarded a full scholarship to MICA. (Maryland Institute for College Arts)

Although Ms. Bleyer did not complete her degree, she maintained her love of art and fashion throughout the years. She was married at a young age, had four children, got divorced and then had to work various jobs to support her family. She worked in real estate and then as a sales director for a personnel solutions company and through it all, she always found a way to use her art and fashion skills by making clothes for her children or by creating fashion-related projects that could be used for charity fundraisers.

In October of 2018, Mano Swartz Furs recognized her talents and offered Ms. Bleyer a trunk show and sale in their shop in Greenspring Station. She styled custom fall and winter hats with luxurious fur for the one-day event.

“It was after I had been a caregiver to my second husband, who died of Alzheimers in 2009, that I decided to reinvent myself and do something creative again. I felt like things have come full circle. My children are all grown with children of their own, and now it was my turn. Here I am!” said Ms. Bleyer.

Bleyer’s work will be featured at the [31st International Couture Collections Show](#) at DC Fashion Week on September 29th, 2019 at 5 PM, The Embassy of France, La Maison Française, 4101 Reservoir Road, D.C., DC, 20007.

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